



2017 Grazing Advisory Number 1: April 4, 2017

Tentative Opening Dates for Grazing in Wilderness Meadows

Background

Each year, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks establish opening dates for grazing in wilderness meadows. This allows the parks to protect biological and scenic resources from the impacts that can occur from grazing before the soil can support the weight of stock or before plants are developed enough to tolerate defoliation.

Meadows are most susceptible to stock impacts when soil moisture levels are high. Thus, the parks use the amount of winter precipitation (measured in the form of mountain snowpack) as a guide when establishing opening dates. Opening dates in wet years are later than those in drier years. To determine the amount of snowpack, the parks collect data across snow courses throughout the winter and spring.

The parks use the amount of moisture in the snowpack to categorize the year as one of the following:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1) Dry | 50% or less of the average April 1 snowpack |
| 2) Normal | 51% to 150% of the average April 1 snowpack |
| 3) Wet | 151% or more of the average April 1 snowpack |

The parks issue two bulletins based on the April 1 and May 1 snowpack measurements in order to allow commercial outfitters, recreational users, and park operations to plan trips in advance. The bulletins update current conditions and anticipated opening dates. **All bulletins are advisory only. The actual opening dates of specific meadows will be determined in the field. For final opening dates, call the Wilderness Office prior to your trip at 559-565-3766.**

Current Situation

Snowpack measurements in the parks show that there is approximately **208%** of the average April 1 snowpack in the Kings and San Joaquin River drainages, **155%** in the Kaweah River drainage, and **226%** in the Kern River drainage. Snowpack data is available at <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/snow/>.

At this time the parks anticipate that 2017 will be categorized as a **wet** year for purposes of setting opening dates in the San Joaquin, Kings, Kaweah, and Kern River drainages.

Tentative Opening Dates

The following list shows the wet year opening dates for the San Joaquin, Kings, Kaweah, and Kern River drainages. The list is arranged by drainage and travel zone.

These dates are only guidelines. Depending on actual conditions, changes in opening dates may be made as the season progresses. If you are planning a trip, it is your responsibility to contact the parks' Wilderness Office at **559-565-3766** for the latest condition update. For more information, also visit www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness.htm.

Note that the opening dates only restrict grazing. The parks permit pack trips prior to opening dates as long as **all feed is packed in** and stock remain tied to either an existing hitch rail or a "high line" between two trees or rocks on a flat, hard, non-vegetated site away from the trail, water, and camp.

We appreciate your cooperation in managing stock use in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Together we can continue to protect the natural diversity and beauty of the Sierra wilderness.

TENTATIVE OPENING DATES

Updated April 4, 2017

San Joaquin River Drainage

| Travel Zone | Forage Areas | Named Areas | Opening Date |
|-------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| 28 | all | Goddard Canyon | 8/1 |
| 33 | 1 | Evolution | 8/15 |
| 33 | 2-4 | McClure, Colby and Darwin | 8/31 |
| 34 | all | Evolution Basin | 8/15 |

Kings River Drainage

| Travel Zone | Forage Areas | Named Areas | Opening Date |
|-------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| 38 | all | Blue Canyon | 8/1 |
| 39 | all | LeConte | 8/15 |
| 42 | all | Dusy Creek | 8/15 |
| 45 | all | Upper Palisade Creek | 8/15 |
| 46 | 1, 3-6 | Upper S. Fork Kings River/Above JMT Jct | 8/15 |
| 46 | 2 | Upper S. Fork Kings River/Below JMT Jct | 8/15 |
| 51 | all | Simpson and Tehipite | 8/1 |
| 52 | all | Kennedy Canyon | 8/1 |
| 53 | 1-6, 8 | Dougherty Creek | 8/15 |
| 53 | 7 | Shorty's Meadow | 8/31 |
| 54 | all | Granite Basin | 8/1 |
| 56 | all | Twin Lakes | 8/1 |
| 57 | all | Woods Lake Basin | 8/15 |
| 58 | 1 | Castle Domes | 8/1 |
| 58 | 2-3 | Woods Creek Crossing | 8/1 |
| 63 | all | Charlotte Creek | 8/1 |
| 65 | all | Upper Bubbs Creek | 8/1 |
| 66 | all | Lower Bubbs Creek | 7/20 |
| 67 | all | East Lake | 7/20 |
| 68 | all | Sphinx Creek | 7/20 |
| 69 | all | Roaring River | 7/20 |
| 70 | all | Cloud Canyon | 7/20 |
| 71 | all | Deadman Canyon | 7/20 |
| 72 | 1-13.1 | Sugarloaf | 7/15 |
| 72 | 13.2-22 | Ferguson | 7/20 |
| 73 | all | Ball Dome Area | 7/20 |

Kern River Drainage

| Travel Zone | Forage Areas | Named Areas | Opening Date |
|-------------|--------------|--|--------------|
| 79 | all | Kern-Kaweah | 8/1 |
| 80 | all | Tyndall Creek | 7/25 |
| 81 | 1-2.2, 2.4 | Wright and Wallace Creeks | 7/25 |
| 81 | 2.3 | Wallace Creek Waterfall | 8/10 |
| 82 | all | Upper Kern Canyon (Junction Mdw to Hot Springs) | 7/25 |
| 83 | 1-3, 7-8 | Lower Crabtree | 8/1 |
| 83 | 4, 6 | Upper Crabtree | 8/20 |
| 84 | all | Lower Rock Creek | 8/1 |
| 85 | all | Upper Rock Creek | 8/15 |
| 86 | all | Lower Kern Canyon (Hot Springs to Kern Ranger Station) | 7/1 |
| 87 | all | Chagoopa Plateau and Big Arroyo | 8/10 |
| 88 | 1-2 | Little Five Lakes | 8/10 |
| 88 | 3-5 | Big Five Lakes | 8/15 |
| 89 | 1-4, 10-13 | Lost, Soda, Lower Rattlesnake, Laurel, Crytes, Coyote | 8/1 |
| 89 | 5-9 | Upper Rattlesnake (>9,000 feet) | 8/15 |

Kaweah River Drainage

| Travel Zone | Forage Areas | Named Areas | Opening Date |
|-------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| 74 | all | Clover and Silliman Creeks | 7/20 |
| 75 | all | Lone Pine Creek | 8/1 |
| 77 | 1-4, 6-7 | Bearpaw Meadow, Cliff Creek, Pinto Lake | 8/1 |
| 77 | 5 | Redwood Meadow | 8/1 |
| 90 | all | Hockett | 7/20 |
| 91 | all | South Fork Kaweah River | 4/1 |
| 96 | all | North Fork Kaweah River | 4/1 |

These tables only list tentative opening dates. Always check for area-specific regulations related to stock use.

Find details about these regulations by calling the Wilderness Office at 559-565-3766, requesting a copy of the annual Stock User's Guide, or visiting the website at www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/stockuse.htm